

5/25

LIBRARY, ST. CHARLES SEMINARY, CARTHAGE, OHIO

The Commonweal

May 20, 1949

An Italian Dead End

Peter Thompson

Missouri Valley Task Force

Edward S. Skillin

Comic Books

John R. Vosburgh

VOLUME L

15c

NUMBER 6

KING'S COLLEGE

Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

(Affiliated with the University of Notre Dame)

A LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE, CONDUCTED BY THE PRIESTS OF THE CONGREGATION OF HOLY CROSS. THE FOLLOWING CURRICULA, LEADING TO DEGREES, ARE OFFERED:

BACHELOR OF ARTS:

Economics	History
Education	Journalism
English	Philosophy

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE:

Accounting
Biology
Chemistry

THREE AND FOUR-YEAR CURRICULA ARE OFFERED IN PREPARATION FOR PROFESSIONAL COURSES IN MEDICINE, DENTISTRY, AND LAW

For information write or call:

REGISTRAR, KING'S COLLEGE, WILKES-BARRE, PA.
Phone: 3-0822

How Do You Feel?

If you have a headache it will occur to you to take an aspirin. Millions of people in the missions seem to have headaches! We can send them aspirin at a very low rate, excellent quality. Send us \$10 and we will send 15,000 aspirin tablets to the missions. The next time you have a headache think of this please. Send your Check to

THE CATHOLIC MEDICAL MISSION
BOARD

10 West 17th St., New York 11, N. Y.

CAMP NOTRE DAME

IN THE FOOTHILLS OF THE WHITE MOUNTAINS
NEW HAMPSHIRE

BOYS — Ages 6 to 16 — GIRLS

NAMASCHUAUG
LAKE SPOFFORD

50th SEASON
\$200 Nine Weeks
\$110 Per Month

SPRUCELAND
GRANITE LAKE

29th SEASON
\$225 for Season
\$120 Per Month

MARQUETTE

BOYS — 29th Season — ON LAKE SPOFFORD

Featuring \$60 Two-Week Reservations
Resident Chaplain and Registered Nurse at Each Camp
Physician in Attendance — Balanced Meals
Finest Equipment — Beautiful Waterfronts — Mature Supervision
Transportation Included in All Fees
For Booklet
(Boys) Write (Girls)
JOHN E. CULLUM — MR. and MRS. L. T. FELL
Camp Notre Dame
Capitol Building, Union City, New Jersey
Phone UNION 3-3810 — If no answer Call UNION 5-7178

Saint Mary's College of California

Conducted by The Christian Brothers

Invites You to California for

Summer Session

June 27 to August 6

Resident and Non-Resident Students Accepted

For Descriptive Folder, Write:

Summer Session Director
Saint Mary's College
California

CAMP ST. JOHN'S

A LAKESIDE MOUNTAIN CAMP

For boys, ages 7-16. 2,300 ft. alt. On sandy shores of Hunter Lake. 100 miles from N.Y.C. Affords best in Camp life. Modern buildings. Lavatory in each cabin. Hot showers. Artesian well. Wholesome, well-balanced meals. Pasteurized milk. Diversified activities, recreational and instructional. Mature, cultural, professional staff. One counsellor for every four boys. Tuition \$400 season. Write or phone for catalogue.

Write: Robert C. Giegengack, Yale Univ. Athletic Assn.,
New Haven, Conn.

Phone:

FOrdham 7-7768 (Bronx) or VIrginia 7-3518 (Woodhaven)
Directors: Rev. Herbert McElroy — Robert Giegengack

Saint Joseph Academy

In Southern Pennsylvania, Near Lancaster
A Catholic school for girls. Grades 9-12. Offers college preparatory, general and commercial courses. Small classes. Beautiful modern building located on 140 acres. Tennis, hockey. \$600 includes laundry. State accredited.
MOTHER SUPERIOR, R.D. 2F, Columbia, Pa.

CAMP WE-HA-KEE

On Green Bay
Marinette, Wisconsin

Conducted by Dominican Sisters, Sinsinawa, Wisconsin
1949 Season June 26-August 21, \$300

For information write

Sister David O'Leary, 192 Ridge Ave., Winnetka, Ill.

The COMMONWEAL

VOLUME L

May 20, 1949

NUMBER 6

THE WEEK	139
REPORT ON AN ITALIAN DEAD END	
<i>Peter Thompson</i>	142
MISSOURI VALLEY TASK FORCE	
<i>Edward S. Skillin</i>	145
HOW THE COMIC BOOK STARTED	
<i>John R. Vosburgh</i>	146
CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL NEWS	148
THE STAGE	
<i>Kappo Phelan</i>	149
THE SCREEN	
<i>Philip T. Hartung</i>	149
OF NOTE	150
BOOKS	152

France Pagan?—Four Favorites—Rumania Under the Soviet Yoke—Oedipus Myth and Complex—China Changed My Mind—His Human Majesty—Glee-Wood—Goethe, Wisdom and Experience—Titans of the Soil

THE COMMONWEAL is indexed in the Reader's Guide, Catholic Periodical Index and The Guide to Catholic Literature Founded by the Calvert Associates, Inc., in 1924 with Michael Williams as President and Editor.

Published weekly and copyrighted 1949 in the U.S.A., by The Commonwealth Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. Murray Hill 3-9685. Entered as second-class matter February 9, 1934, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. U. S. and Canada \$7 a year. Foreign \$8. Single copies 15c.

EDWARD S. SKILLIN, Editor

PHILIP BURNHAM, Executive Editor

EDWARD F. MEAGHER, Assistant Editor

Associate Editors

John C. Cort, Anne Fremantle, Gregory Smith
Kappo Phelan, Theatre; Philip T. Hartung, Cinema

Advertising Manager

John Brubaker

Labor Law Prospect

WHILE THE NATION'S farmers got the main credit for the Democratic victory of last November, labor votes also played an important part. During the campaign Mr. Truman made and reiterated his party's pledge to repeal the Taft-Hartley Act. The fact that the 83 Representatives who voted to sustain the President's veto of Taft-Hartley has swelled to the 203 who opposed the GOP-Dixiecrat Wood Bill the other day points to a tremendous increase in labor strength in the House. Not enough to swing outright T-H repeal, however.

That a revival of the Wagner Act might not be all clear sailing was revealed even before the election when a reported Truman plan to get enough Democratic candidates for Congress to pledge publicly that they would vote for T-H repeal, had to be abandoned for lack of numbers. Insiders also knew that if a bill more favorable to labor were to be achieved at all, it would have to be accomplished before certain controversial major industry wage-hour-security negotiations got under way this spring: in the coal, steel, auto and electrical industries.

Yet the nation's labor leaders stubbornly held out too long for the Thomas-Lesinski measure

(which would have repealed Taft-Hartley and reenacted a revised Wagner Bill) even though the requisite strength in Congress was lacking. When that alley turned out to be a dead-end, Labor belatedly threw its weight behind the less palatable Sims Bill, which went down to defeat in the House by some forty votes. Then that body actually passed the hated Wood Bill; only by resort to a technicality was the bill next day submitted to another vote and by a margin of three Representatives sent back to committee. Major labor disputes are too immediately in the offing for the House to be able to remove Taft-Hartley from the books now without overcoming tremendous obstacles.

The next labor law arena is the Senate, where pro-labor forces are even weaker. The opening debate will deal with the Thomas-Lesinski Bill; then that august body will entertain more conservative measures. There are hopes that the lead as to how next to revise our national labor legislation will come from the Senate—particularly if labor's champions prove to be more realistic and conciliatory.

Since these discussions will now get in motion against a background of serious industrial unrest, it seems virtually certain that any compromise upon which a Senate majority could agree would empower the President to deal directly with nationwide strikes which become national emergencies. A cooling off period of 60, rather than the present 80, days is looked upon with high favor by the compromisers. Such things as mass picketing, jurisdictional strikes and union contributions to campaign funds would continue to be outlawed, and in most cases secondary boycotts. And unions would still be required to file financial reports with the Government if they were to avail themselves of the facilities of the National Labor Relations Board. Such concessions are believed to be inevitable if labor is to secure Taft-Hartley repeal.

A good instance of the state of mind of more thoughtful union adherents is furnished by the ACTU *Labor Leader*, which recommends the immediate action of storming the Senate with postcards, letters, telegrams and union delegations. For the longer pull its new Washington correspondent calls for special strategy to build up labor representation in Congress. One operation would concentrate on the South, unionizing its industries and exerting steady pressure on Southern members of Congress. Other forces would fan out to state capitols in an effort to persuade state legislatures to reapportion their Congressional districts in such a way that what the unions hold to be rural "overloading" of the House in Washington would be corrected. At the same time a nationwide educational campaign would aim at demonstrating to the nation's farmers the importance of collaboration between

farmers and industrial workers in their mutual interest. This last has great potentialities even outside the area of domestic power politics.

One perplexity about the best way for the unions to prepare for the 1950 elections remains. American apathy toward off-year elections is stubborn. And what friends of labor have to decide is whether a compromise labor relations measure, even if far short of sanguine expectations, might not calm passions which, with Taft-Hartley still in operation, would otherwise produce a record labor turn-out at the polls.

But all these questions of immediate and long-term labor strategy imply that a time of compromise is at hand. What concessions the union leaders accept should be adopted not grudgingly but whole-heartedly. For the unions still have a major job in public relations ahead of them; too long have they themselves been carried away by slogans and "mandates." Year in year out they have a far better chance of legislative backing for their just demands if they have won general public support also. Besides, government by blocs (farm, labor and business, for example) has many drawbacks. And just as considerable concessions on all sides appear to be the only means of securing a repeal, or serious revision, of the Taft-Hartley Act in the present Congress, so a better job of presenting the case of the unions to the general public is necessary before the demands of organized labor can be assured of a fair hearing in the years to come.

Less Popcorn on the Ginza?

TWO YEARS AGO this month Japan adopted a democratic constitution. This year on Constitution Day General MacArthur bowed low in the direction of the Japanese and apologized for his prolonged military presence in their country. He said that continued occupation was not the fault of the Japanese; it was due to international circumstances beyond their control. This apology, coming from a man who arrived in Tokyo only after a long and arduous struggle, is a rather dramatic indication of the change in our attitude toward Japan. Four years after VJ Day we find ourselves courting the conquered.

Our change of heart is such that MacArthur is ready to leave things pretty much to the Japanese "just as rapidly as [they] are able to assume the attending autonomous responsibility." The State Department says that "under the guiding hand of the occupation, it is important from the point of view of developing responsible government in Japan that it should be given increasing direction of its own affairs. . . ."

To implement this relaxed attitude, Washington has ordered the occupation to hasten the de-control of prices in Japan, where production is

officially listed as 68.8 percent of normal; unofficially, the figure is reported as around 80 percent.

There are signs that the "guiding hand" over this new policy will reach out from Washington. In the last six months there have been an increasing number of directives from the US calling the policy decisions for the occupation, and now it is announced that 40 percent of the civilian occupation authorities in Japan will be replaced soon by Army personnel—a change that is interpreted not as a militaristic move, but one designed to make the occupation officials "messenger boys" carrying out Washington's plans for a more autonomous Japan.

These plans depend on local, "responsible government in Japan." Right now, the government is split between the conservative Right, which is in power, and the Communist Left, both of which took strength in the last election from the democratic center parties.

An increase in self-government is, of course, to be expected and encouraged as the normal course of events in any occupation of a conquered nation. But at this particular time, against the background of our deteriorating position in China, there must be a tempting, expedient, if unannounced, desire in Washington to build up Japan as a potential and autonomous ally against communism in the Far East.

If this is the intention of our newly formulated Japanese policy, it is a course of action surrounded by hazards. One is this: while we have openly said that we are de-emphasizing military occupation in Japan, it is nonetheless impossible to abandon Japan to its own defenses, since the Japanese constitution provides for no military force of any size. It is somewhat contradictory to grease the wheels of Japan's industry and then abandon it all to aggressors.

Another hazard is the assumption that the Japanese will play along with us as an ally. This assumption ignores Japan's historical rôle in the Far East and it takes for granted that the natural vindictiveness of a conquered people has dissipated in a kind of holy conversion.

Observers in Japan point out that the Japanese are a long way from being ready to control their own affairs, since they know little yet about using what democratic techniques they have.

And there is, principally, the job of keeping old-line politicians and businessmen on the side of liberal reform—such as the current land reform, which equalizes rents and turns tenants into independent owner-farmers. To prop up a conservative government simply because it is anti-communist would be inviting disaster.

With the shift of American policy on Japan from repression to revival, there is actually an increasing, rather than a decreasing, necessity that we keep a close watch on affairs in Japan. To make an autonomous ally out of that country

at this time is a questionable possibility or policy. When General MacArthur said to the Japanese: "That Allied forces still occupy your native soil is thus far by no means due to any fault of yours . . .," he may have been right. But now is hardly the time for wishful thinking about Japan.

Progress in Indonesia

THE END of five months of bitter fighting, by the agreement reached in Batavia between the Dutch and the Indonesians at a UN-sponsored mediation conference, is at hand. Reports from the scene declare that big concessions were granted by both parties, but thus far in the proceedings it would seem that the Dutch are especially to be commended for giving up strategic military vantage points as one of the first steps in the agreement.

What has been decided at Batavia is of a preliminary character. The Republic of Indonesia is to exercise its authority in and around the capital, Jogakarta, the guerrillas are to stop fighting, political prisoners are to be freed by the Dutch. Envisioned eventually is a free and sovereign United States of Indonesia. But the actual means of transferring authority and the whole status of the new federation remain to be worked out at The Hague over an extensive period. Indonesian leaders are gravely concerned that what they consider to be matters of internal organization of their federation and their domestic policies be left entirely to themselves. While the fact that they have expressed the hope that the UN Assembly will go through with its plans to discuss the Indonesian question shows that they still feel the need of exerting pressure on the Dutch. The latest word is that the Assembly—much to the distaste of the USSR—will now defer its Indonesian discussions until September. This plan has the virtue of not exerting immediate pressure on negotiators who presumably are seeking in good faith to reach a decent agreement; at the same time the ultimate sanction of UN censure remains to influence the outcome.

The achievement of a just and democratic settlement in Indonesia will have far wider than local implications. In the Orient the prestige of the non-Communist West is now squarely in the spotlight. Likewise in Europe the group-prestige of the signatories of the North Atlantic Pact as defenders of democracy and human freedom. So that what once appeared as a source of Holland's strength, with her skillful subjugation and exploitation of the populous East Indies, has at the present day come to contain sources of weakness from the viewpoint of political morale.

It would seem that the most difficult element to be worked out in the forthcoming parley at the Hague is economic rather than political. The

formula which best meets the needs of both Dutch and Indonesians will not be easy to arrive at. The Indonesians start with the disadvantage which always attends those who concentrate on production of raw materials, while population in the Islands is highly concentrated. Holland itself is one of the most densely populated countries in the world with considerable pressure on its food supply. Both countries face difficult economic prospects. Changing an exploitative colonial system to one of economic autonomy must not simply be a dropping of responsibilities. That is why it is all the more necessary that the good will engendered under UN auspices in Batavia continue to prevail as Dutch and Indonesians proceed to work out together their tortuous economic and political problems.

Smoke and Smog

LAST OCTOBER, when industrial smoke combined with low-lying clouds to form a smog blanket over Donora, Pennsylvania, twenty persons succumbed to the fumes before the atmosphere cleared. This disaster set off scares in most cities and temporarily drew public attention to the polluted air we breathe.

Since then, the US Public Health Service has been conducting tests at Donora, the results of which are soon to be released in the hope that the findings will encourage industries to study the matter of clearing the air around their factories.

Clearing the air over whole cities is also a field of action that is receiving more attention. After a year of study in Los Angeles, Dr. Louis C. McCabe, Air Pollution Control Commissioner, reports that if enough study is expended in each particular area "any industrial community anywhere can set up its own code and achieve a reasonable compromise between the ideal cleanliness of country air and the high degree of pollution in many modern cities." Such a code could be enforced, since the method of detection involves finding the weight of air contaminants emitted from industrial plants in proportion to total waste output.

On another anti-pollution front, the Ford Motor Company has recently announced a one and a half million dollar program at its River Rouge plant to fight against stream pollution in the disposal of acid, tar and oil sewage. Other companies have similar programs, and as Mr. L. A. Danse of GM puts it: "Industry simply cannot afford to pollute streams and thus alienate the good will of those who are expected to buy its products."

If more industries and cities which throw off smoke and sewage were to take a similar attitude and follow it up with action, there might yet be a way to breathe clean air again in our cities. The time is already late to start taking the Donora disaster to heart.

Report on an Italian Dead End

Rooms six by five—what a field worker
finds seventy-five miles from Rome

Peter Thompson

SOME two hundred kilometres south and east of Rome, among the highest peaks of the Apennines, lies the Cinquemiglia plateau, one of the most sinister landscapes in Italy. Upon this small plateau, uninhabited and uninhabitable, a cold wind blows at all seasons of the year. It is hemmed in by bare mountain peaks; and from the forests that clothe the lower slopes of these peaks, the wolves come out in the winter nights.

At the southern extremity of this plateau the market town of Castel di Sangro (some 3500 inhabitants) lies behind a great rock. Early on market mornings while it is still dark enough for lanterns, there is a procession of people and pack mules across the plateau, shawled women with baskets of pepper fruit and onions, men in canvas shoes leading the mules that are loaded with potatoes and sometimes with more valuable merchandise like twin-handled earthenware jugs. When the plateau is crossed the people become happier, begin to talk in loud voices, and to look the day in the face. They are, as they put it, back in Italy again.

The church of Castel di Sangro has twin towers in Spanish Baroque style and stands above a small terraced piazza with the houses of the old town assembled about it in picturesque and dependent proximity. The bell-ringer, Luigi Caruso, lives next to the church in a building that once was a convent. He inhabits one room: six feet by five. Since he is 74, he sleeps on the single bed: his widowed daughter and her daughter sleep on a mattress on the stone floor. The family also eat in this room (the mattress, a long narrow sack filled with straw, is rolled up during the daytime) and cook there. The cooking range is a small grill supported by two piles of bricks over some embers in a corner of the room. There is no chimney but the Carusos are fortunate in having a window, so that the smoke has another way out besides through the door.

About half the families in the Civita (as the older part of Castel di Sangro is called) sleep in rooms without windows. All of them sleep three or four to a bed, in many cases girls of twenty sleeping with their brothers of equal age or with their fathers. To get a sense of all this, you might go up the eleven almost perpendicular

steps leading from the street level to Oriente Cartullo's home, snug as a gas chamber. Cartullo was badly wounded in the war. He sleeps with his wife and four children (the youngest boy, five, has a contagious sore on his leg) in one double bed in a windowless room. He cannot improve his sleeping arrangements even if he comes by another bed for there is nowhere to put it. The living room is smaller than the bedroom and in the bedroom the bed touches three of the walls; by the fourth there is just room to squeeze past a chest of drawers to the door. A famous English Catholic writer and apologist, when informed recently of these conditions, argued that much as one might sympathize it was clear that the inhabitants of Castel di Sangro were an improvident lot, for otherwise they would have taken before now to using hammocks.

★

THERE ARE no drains anywhere in the Civita. The steep, cobbled lanes are also the sewage ducts. In one or two houses there are lavatories—open holes over cess pits—which are to be found in the kitchen and are shared by two or more families. It is one of the two particulars distinguishing the house shared by the four Sisters of Charity that the lavatory there is in a room apart. Even so, because of the absence of water, it does, as the young Sister who showed me around expressed it, carry the stench of Hell. The other distinguishing mark is extreme cleanliness. This was unexpected because in the courtyard I had met a pig, and on the landing two goats were being milked: the animals, however, belonged not to the Sisters but to other families sharing the house.

The four Sisters were in Castel di Sangro before the war. In the spring of 1944 when, after an eight months' battle, it became certain that the Allied armies would cross the Sangro River, the Germans burned and blew up all that they could of Castel di Sangro before retreating. The people, taking with them the statues of their saints, went into exile to Apulia and Calabria and the Sisters went with them. For twenty-four days five hundred of the people, and among them the Sister Superior of nearly seventy years,

were trapped in a barn in no man's land between the fire of the opposing armies. After the Liberation the Sisters came back. Their town was eighty per cent destroyed. Their own house had no roof, some of the walls were down, the floors were loose planks. They fixed up shelter within their house by an arrangement of canvas and boards and somehow got through the first dreadful winter of 1944-45, when, because of mined and snow-blocked roads, food had to be dropped to the survivors in the town by American airplanes. They set about making life a little more bearable for all who had returned.

★

THEY have now an asilo (a nursery school) of 150 children who are entirely dependent on the school for their meals. International bodies like UNRRA, and since UNRRA has been dissolved, AUSA and UNRRA-CASAS have helped the Sisters. The local commune used to give them free wood and charcoal and electric light and a certain amount of medicines for their school, but since the Christian Democrat majority in the local commune has been fortified by the results of the 1948 elections beyond any fear of defeat, this help has been discontinued.

The parish priest is close to senility. He recently had the statues of the Infant Jesus in the church (painted wooden statues made about two hundred years ago) covered in muslin frocks lest their nakedness should offend his parishioners' modesty. This, by the way, I discovered for myself: not through the Sisters whose loyalty to those in authority over them, priest or mayor, is tempered only by bewilderment. They labor in this dead end of the centuries with gallantry and cheerfulness and most profoundly alone. Their house was founded in 1852—they pray ever day that they will be in Castel di Sangro to see its centenary. But of course if it is not to be—pazienza!

Castel di Sangro is the centre of one of the derelict areas of Italy. What was not destroyed by eight months of battle was accounted for by the German use of the scorched earth policy in their retreat. Village after village was systematically destroyed so that the Allied soldiers could find no shelter.

At Roccaraso, a well-known ski resort before the war, favored by Mussolini, besides their normal thoroughness in mining every house the Germans also painstakingly cut down every fir tree on the hillside behind the village and attached mines to the trunks. But why? One asks that question about such happenings and the reply, as always, whether given by an out-of-work ski instructor, or a shepherd on his way south to Apulia with his sheep for the winter, or a contadino bleak of face as the land from which

he scratches a living, is simply: "wickedness" and a shrug of the shoulders. It is the same for the unpleasantness at Pietransieri (five kilometres from Roccaraso) where the Germans, to impress everyone in the district with the advantages of going north with them in their retreat, shot at random one hundred and twenty-seven men, women and children because the village had elected to stay behind and wait for the Allies—not out of any affection for the Allies but out of reluctance to leave the soil to which every man there had been born. "Wickedness." Men do these things as certainly as there is the Devil. There is no bitterness. The deeds are remembered—inevitably. But they have been forgiven.

★

WHAT THERE is of bitterness is a bitterness against Italians. Bitterness against the government in Rome, against the provincial authorities in Aquila, Campobasso or Chieti, against the local commune. Except after the most energetic prompting, the Italian authorities have done nothing for this region of the Abruzzi. They can for excuse point to the legion of economic and political embarrassments that beset Italy's recovery. They can instance the long tradition of apathy that left the Abruzzi region in neglect in the years before the war. They can blame the silence of the people who have been patient in their poverty. So long as their poverty was just endurable and their world was left in peace, this patience lasted. But in these last five years they have been reduced to such a depth of wretchedness, these obstinate, religious, loyal and unlettered people, that they are beginning at last to question their lot. In villages where the priest has courage and energy he is their natural and effective spokesman.

In Pietransieri, for instance, the priest by a series of letters to the provincial authorities in Aquila and the Government authorities in Rome (his ultimate letter addressed personally to Tupini, Minister of Public Works, was, to my mind, like a product of the milder climate of English agitation, almost actionable) has succeeded in extracting a written promise from the Government for the provision of a school, and of water and electricity by the spring of 1949. He has, however, so far failed to persuade the provincial representatives of the Ministry of Public Works that the new houses erected by the Ministry in Pietransieri should be equipped with lavatories. Pietransieri has never had a lavatory, and local and central authority is, in this case at least, at one in an anxious deference to tradition.

In Ataleta, a village much more accessible than Pietransieri (though also destroyed almost totally by the Germans) the priest, who in time of war led his people waist and shoulder deep across

the flooding Sangro River to the safety of the Allied lines, is now guiding them through the milder hazards of persuading authority to restore electricity. By the light of three candles in a branched silver candlestick in the sacristy of his wooden church—given by the Swiss Caritas organization—he read me his latest stinger. Poor Tuppini was getting it in the neck again. Election promises were being remembered, encyclicals were being quoted, the Christianity of Christian Democracy was being called to evidence. It must be a hard life playing the game of Italian politics and keeping up at least an appearance of interest in the social encyclicals; and the Christian Democrat politician must occasionally long for the relief of indulging in a little, full-blooded anti-clericalism.

★

NOT ALL the priests have the drive and comprehension of those of Pietransieri and Ataleta, or the resourcefulness of the parrocco of a tiny village near Capracotta (where the snow, according to a memorial in the piazza, was on January 1, 1945, fifteen feet deep) who in the first winters after the Liberation had to be, as well as priest, also schoolmaster, pharmacist and midwife.

In many places the priest seems to have been defeated by the poverty, squalor and ignorance surrounding him. Often he is as poor as any of his parishioners, and deep in apathy. One priest I met has for his only protection against the weather, in country where the winter temperature drops to 26 degrees below zero, a rough cloak made from a length of oiled linen that had come to him through some UNRRA distribution. Most of the parishes are too poorly beneficed to support a priest and he has to be helped out by the State which pays him a maximum stipend of 42,000 lire a year: which at present exchange rates is a little over 60 dollars. Five dollars a month. The priests are almost entirely from peasant families. It is not surprising that in some of the parishes the priest should be without confidence in himself; that he should be without much hope of raising his parish from its brutish destitution. He is content to perform the minimum of his duties and wait for death. For his people there is no voice. One day perhaps the Communists will move in on some very easy ground. Until now they have not bothered, preferring to concentrate on areas where disaffection can do the most harm to the national economy. The man of most consequence in these abandoned villages is the local mago or sorcerer. He is sought by the people to cure sterility, to evoke love, to placate the future, to impose and to avert the evil eye.

MOST OF THE reconstruction in the Castel di Sangro area of the Abruzzi has been directly or indirectly effected through the UNRRA-CASAS organization, which with comparatively modest resources drawn from the UNRRA Lire Fund, and no fuss or publicity, has since June, 1946, re-housed throughout Italy about five hundred thousand people whose homes were damaged or destroyed in the war.

Ninety-five per cent of all the house repairs in the devastated villages of the Abruzzi have been made through this organization, which provides material in anticipation of war damage compensation payments and the free transport of these materials from the kilns, as far distant as two hundred kilometres, to the house or to the nearest mule track by way of appalling roads.

All the heavily damaged villages have also had new houses built by UNRRA-CASAS, houses designed to fit the local landscape, equipped with baths, kitchen sinks and appliances and tables, built-in cupboards, and a large open hearth in the living room as a focus for the family life; and having room enough for the fruitfulness of Abruzzese families.

★

THE AIMS of the CASAS program are to provide the war homeless with homes and to help people help themselves. So in each place where CASAS houses are built, a social assistant appointed by CASAS lives. It is the job of this assistant, usually a woman, to acclimatize the families in the new houses to their new way of living (since most of them come from conditions described at the beginning of this report, this acclimatizing has to be a long, patient and tactful work), to help provide them with the necessary minimum means to achieve that economic security without which the family cannot hold together, to enable them to take fullest advantage of whatever social services are already provided, to institute those services if they are not already available or to improve the application of them. For the first six months or so of tenancy the family pays no rent. After that they pay—if they can—the minimum rent normal to their district for a period up to some twelve or fifteen years after which the apartment (houses are semi-detached with two apartments to each house) becomes their property.

The CASAS program is financed to the end of 1951. Its effect in stabilizing Italian family life after the shocks and disasters of the war—especially in the Abruzzi, where often the priest and the CASAS assistant are the only people able and willing to penetrate the apathy of the public authorities—is likely to be profound. Every group of CASAS houses is intended to, and does become the nucleus of a revitalized community.

Missouri Valley Task Force

Not simply a question of big dams,
says a recent Hoover report

Edward S. Skillin

SINCE THE EXPERTS reporting to the Hoover "Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government" have tackled so many ramifications and published such voluminous reports, some of their most striking findings are likely to remain buried. That is particularly the case with such normally uncontroversial topics as Natural Resources (Appendix L). And such considerations as the Hoover men raise about development of the vast Missouri Valley deserve to come to light—indeed, one-sixth of the land area of the whole United States is involved.

The 2460-mile Missouri Valley presents a complex problem because of its periodically recurring serious droughts and floods and the diversity of interests and needs between the upper and lower reaches of the Valley. Nearer the source—in the Great Plains area of Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, the Dakotas and western Nebraska—the big need is irrigation; in the lower valley—east Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa and Missouri—it is flood control. Advocates of a Missouri Valley Authority have long contended that these and other major regional needs could best be met, in the interests of all, by an integrated, coordinated program directed by an over-all authority. Furthermore, they have accused the Army Engineers and the Reclamation Bureau of the federal Department of the Interior of reaching the compromise Pick-Sloan plan, which is now actually under way, only in order to forestall the creation of the long-sought Missouri Valley Authority. Fear that an MVA might be created is assuredly the most plausible reason that the Engineers and the Bureau have, for the moment, compromised their long-standing differences.

★

IF A GROUP of men is on the outlook for inefficiencies, the Pick-Sloan irrigation, navigation, water-power and flood control program presents plenty of openings. The Hoover "Task Force" in the Missouri Valley not unsurprisingly found that the plan embodies what "is essentially an hydraulic engineering approach" and points out that "no means" are "provided for an integrated dynamic view of the region as a whole." At another juncture the Task Force states: "Suc-

cessful regulation of the Missouri and its tributaries for the development of irrigation, navigation and water power can only be managed on a basin-wide scale."

Moreover, the report goes further and says that the Pick-Sloan forces, by starting with big dams, have gone at the whole thing "backward." This has afforded great satisfaction to adherents of a Missouri Valley Authority patterned on the TVA. For these latter had hardly expected so much ammunition from a conservative source.

On the other hand the "task force" readily admits that the construction of dams, development of new sources of hydro-electric power, the strengthening of the levees on the lower Missouri and other aspects of the Pick-Sloan program inevitably will benefit the people of the Great Plains and the lower Valley. The Hoover investigators criticize its inefficiencies more than its objectives, indicating how it is wasteful, and suggests ways in which the potentialities of this great river valley, heavily endowed with mineral, forest and agricultural resources, could be more adequately realized.

★

THERE ARE TWO specific points in the report which may considerably revise the ideas of those who advocate the TVA type of river valley authority for the nation's major streams. For such projects tend to include coordinated development in every direction: irrigation, hydro-electric power, flood control, navigation and the like. The object is to build up the economy of the whole area, and of all elements in the area, encompassed by the valley.

But on the Missouri River, it seems, navigation is a questionable objective. Periods of drought tend to be of several years duration to begin with. As a result there are doubts whether a navigable channel can be maintained consistently enough to serve as a regular means of low-cost transportation.

The present channel below Sioux City is but six feet deep and the plan is to increase it to nine feet—to provide a waterway for something more than skiffs and barges. With the reservoirs already operating or in prospect on the upper

[145]

streams, it would be possible to maintain this new nine-foot channel even in most bad years. Yet by the time the channel is completed, the Mississippi itself, into which the Missouri flows at St. Louis, is to have a new twelve-foot channel. Apparently any practicable Missouri River navigation would have to be able to handle boats from the Father of Waters. And it is clearly not feasible for this vast tributary to store up enough water to maintain a twelve-foot channel of its own during recurring dry spells.

This would seem to throw the idea of developing river traffic on the Missouri into a cocked hat; it throws into serious question the wisdom of expenditures for such facilities at all. But the Hoover men do not find this in the least disturbing. As they present it, the only purpose of river traffic—no matter how picturesque—is to provide competition with the railroads, and surely there must be other, uncostly means of reducing the excessive freight rates in the area.

★

THE other question raised about over-all development has to do with irrigation. In the great majority of years, which are adequately moist, the farmers on the Great Plains show little interest in irrigation—perhaps they are too busy expanding their plantings and the cropping of their herds. Whatever the reason, the “task force” found surprisingly limited popular interest in any extensive expansion of irrigation there.

Moreover, it is hardly in the public interest to expend vast sums for increasing the agricultural production of an area which has a greater and more basic need of realizing its great industrial potential. Such expansion of farm production is particularly questionable now in a period of huge commodity surpluses. Either from the viewpoint of the region itself or of the United States as a whole. Indeed the only way to set a long-needed economic upturn in motion in this depressed area is to establish a good balance between farming and industry.

So that if an over-all authority, such as MVA, were eventually to replace the Pick-Sloan make-shift, and supplant the purely advisory Missouri Basin Inter-Agency Committee as well, its program might be more restricted than has generally been supposed. If it were able to give due proportion both to the vital interests of the region and to those of the nation as a whole, the new authority might very conceivably curtail the billion a year American taxpayers are to pay out annually for Missouri Valley projects for the next six years. Such savings would be indeed a surprising result of attempting a major development of the Missouri Basin as a whole. These savings could then be added, for a genuine appraisal, to the increase in local and national

wealth resulting from intelligent regional development. At the same time the revised program would also provide an effective check to the major droughts and equally destructive floods which have so periodically scourged the vast Missouri Valley.

How the Comic Book Started

And how the originator looks on it now

JOHN R. VOSBURGH

FIFTEEN years ago there were no comic books. Now 60 million are sold every month. The man chiefly responsible for all this is a scholarly cigar merchant named Harry I. Wildenberg of Key West, Fla. Wildenberg invented the comic book back in 1932 when he was a 45-year-old sales manager for Eastern Color Printing Company in New York. He's genuinely sorry about it now and personally would like to see comic books abolished.

Although it's pretty late for that, Wildenberg is happiest when he reads in a newspaper that some school children have held comic book bonfires—in Spencer, W. Va. and Binghamton, N. Y., for example. When Los Angeles passed an ordinance against comic books, Wildenberg was highly pleased. He's been denouncing the lurid little nightmare makers for years and has never allowed his young daughter, Joan, to read them.

Wildenberg's job used to be to concoct ideas that would sell color printing for Eastern, which also printed the comic sections for a score of newspapers along the Atlantic Seaboard—including the *Boston Globe*, *Brooklyn Times*, *Providence Journal* and *Newark Ledger*.

An advertising man since his graduation from College of the City of New York in 1906, Wildenberg had always been fascinated by the miles of funny sheets which rolled off Eastern's presses each week. He never read them and didn't understand how anyone else could, but he could see their commercial possibilities. If the funny papers are this popular, he reasoned, they should prove a good advertising medium. He decided to suggest a tabloid of comics to one of his clients. Gulf Oil Company liked the idea, hired an artist and created its own comics. Wildenberg promptly had Eastern print them, probably the first tabloid comics published for distribution outside of a newspaper.

Wildenberg and Gulf were astonished when the tabloids were grabbed up as fast as Gulf service stations could offer them. Distribution shot to 3,000,000 copies a week.

HOWEVER, he had no idea of originating the comic book until some weeks later when he was idly folding a newspaper in halves, then in quarters. He was racking his mind for something to fit the color presses which printed 32,000 eight-page sections per hour. Hence, he had to think in multiples of the standard newspaper page. As he looked at the twice-folded paper it occurred to him that it was a convenient book size.

"Why not a comic book?" he reflected. "It would have 32 or 64 pages and make a fine item for concerns which distribute premiums."

He obtained publishing rights to Bell Syndicate comics, had an artist make up a few dummies by hand and sent them to his biggest advertisers. Wildenberg received a telegram from Procter & Gamble almost before you could say Ivory Soap.

He got an order for a million 32-page comic magazines in color.

"In all respects," says Wildenberg, "this was the first comic book ever printed or distributed by anyone."

P & G called it "Comics on Parade." The book contained many of the better known newspaper strips of the day including Mutt and Jeff, Buck Rogers, Napoleon and others. The premium idea sold also to a number of other firms which sent the comic books to boys and girls in return for coupons cut out from boxes and wrappers.

Although the booklets were now being distributed by the million, no one had yet put them on the retail market. The idea that anyone would pay for them seemed fantastic to Wildenberg, but he finally decided the retail market might be worth trying if he could utilize an already established sales outlet. Why not the five-and-ten-cent stores?

★

THE FIRST went to Woolworth's. The late Oscar Fitz-Alan Douglas, sales brains of Woolworth, showed some interest but after several months' deliberation decided the book would not give enough value for 10 cents. Kress, Kresge, McCrory and several of the other dime store concerns turned Wildenberg down even more abruptly.

He next went to George Hecht, editor of *Parents Magazine*, and tried to persuade him to run a comic supplement or publish a "higher level" comic magazine. Hecht also frowned on the idea.

"Even the comic syndicates couldn't see it," Wildenberg relates. "'Who's going to read old comics?' they asked. Also they couldn't see why children would pay 10 cents for a comic magazine when they could get all they want in a Sunday newspaper."

But Wildenberg was convinced that children—and grown-ups too—were not getting all the comics they wanted in the Sunday papers. Otherwise, the Gulf and premium comics would not have met such popularity.

"I decided," he says, "that if boys and girls were willing to work for premium coupons to obtain comic books they might be willing to pay 10 cents on the newsstands."

EASTERN turned the idea down cold but Wildenberg took his idea to George Delacorte of Dell Publishing Company. Delacorte finally agreed to publish the comic book "magazine" for retail sale. He ordered 40,000 copies for the first edition.

The comic books sold out in 30 days but Delacorte refused to get out a second edition. "Advertisers won't use it," he complained. "They say it's not dignified enough."

Wildenberg turned to Eastern again. He pointed out that the Dell edition had sold out in all parts of the country and not a single copy had come back unsold. Delacorte's profit was \$2,000. Wildenberg emphasized that Eastern could make a manufacturer's profit by printing its own books whereas Dell had to be content with only a sales profit. After months of pleading he finally convinced the company to put out a trial edition of 200,000 copies in July, 1934. American News Company distributed it.

Ninety per cent of the copies sold out and a second issue was published in September. From then on the comic book was published monthly. Every issue showed greater sales than the preceding one until within a year close to a million 64-page books were being sold monthly at 10 cents apiece. Eastern received the lion's share of the receipts. American News paid the publisher 6 cents a copy at first, later 6½ cents. Of the remainder the distributor received a cent or a cent and a half and the dealer 2 to 2½ cents. Eastern was netting roughly \$30,000 per issue. The comic syndicates received \$640 (\$10 per page) for publishing rights.

For the title of this, the first comic book to go into continuous production, Wildenberg resurrected the *Famous Funnies* name that he had proposed for a soap company's comics. Subscription price was raised after three months from \$1.00 to \$1.50 per year but the newsstand price persists to this day. Rather than change the convenient dime price during these days of high production costs the publishers have cut the number of pages from 64 to 32.

Eastern's experiment was watched skeptically by the publishing world but nine months after *Famous Funnies* was blandly placed on sale alongside the *Atlantic Monthly* and *Harpers*, at least three other competitors were in the field. One of these eventually entering the frantic race to bring this new cultural medium to the masses was none other than Hecht of *Parents Magazine*.

★

THERE are now about 23 comic book publishers in the advertising market alone, producing 138 books. Many other comic books are published which don't sell advertising. Best estimates place the total comic book circulation at 60,000,000.

Many publishers got their start during the war when the comic magazine caught on in the armed services at a rate equaled only by pin-up girls. Every Army camp, Navy vessel and air base was littered with the gaudy booklets.

Wildenberg recalls also that Hecht was not the only

scoffer who was finally converted. Delacorte saw the light again and is now a specialist in "one-shot" comics, a trade term for comic books having one central character. Dell's "one-shot" characters range from Felix the Cat to Gene Autry.

One of the most successful publishers is a former advertising manager of Wildenberg's, Lev Gleason by name, who later went to work for a feature syndicate. He got out a comic book called *Tip Top Comics* for the syndicate and then started one of his own.

Another publisher put out *Superman*, which opened the gates for a torrent of weird comic book characters—The Human Torch, Blonde Phantom and Batman, to mention a few. A couple of publishers have at least indulged in a touch of humor by bringing out *Super Duck* and *Supersnipe*.

Wildenberg does not begrudge the success of his former colleagues but he does resent the claim of any of them to being the inventor of the comic book.

★

IN ADDITION to cigar jobbing, Wildenberg now follows a painting hobby in Key West good enough to land exhibits in the American, Roerich and Squibb Art galleries. Scholarly and soft-spoken, he bears a sharp resemblance to Bernard Baruch, with strong features, white hair and a powerful physique.

Wildenberg is well aware of the influence of the comic book on American culture, especially children. "I don't feel proud that I started the comic books," he says. "If I had had an inkling of the harm they would do, I would never have gone through with the idea."

He looks upon himself as a sort of Dr. Frankenstein, aghast at the forces he set in motion that day he designed the first comic book. His blue eyes narrow disapprovingly beneath heavy white brows at any favorable remark about the comics.

Discussing the subject with him in his book-stacked apartment, the writer, himself a frequent reader of *Li'l Abner*, *Out Our Way* and a few other comics, endeavored to enter a defense of some newspaper funnies, at least. Wildenberg would have none of it—nor, for that matter, would his pretty young wife, who also paints. "Do you know," he remarked to her recently, "that you are looking at the man who changed the reading habits of a generation?"

Wildenberg denies that there is any inconsistency between his antagonism to comic books and the fact that he stayed in the business several years.

"You must remember," he said, "that in the beginning I gave little thought to the social aspects of the matter. In business a man seldom thinks beyond profits. The social impact of an idea, an invention, is secondary, if he contemplates it at all. It was my business to sell comics and it did not even occur to me to weigh the effects they would have."

He paused, and then said slowly, "I'm glad parents and educators are waking up to the menace of the comic books. I'd be glad to do what I could to help."

Catholic International News

1950: Holy Year

THE HOLY YEAR which will take place during 1950 has its origins in the Old Law of the Jews which set aside each fiftieth year as a time when past injuries should be pardoned, debts remitted, Hebrew slaves set free, and every household reunited. The Catholic Church has continued the tradition of the Old Law by setting aside a Jubilee year as a period of special prayer and penance. The Holy Year is now celebrated by the Church every 25 years, so that each generation will have a greater opportunity of participating in the many indulgences offered only during the Jubilee.

The celebration of the Jubilee in 1950 will be the 25th of its kind in Church history. It was in 1300 that Boniface VIII became the first Pope to proclaim a Holy Year in a Bull, or papal letter. Referring to the many Jubilee observances of both Hebrew and early Christian history, he declared he would grant anew "great remissions and indulgences" which are to be obtained "by visiting the city of Rome and the venerable Basilica of the Prince of the Apostles." The Church has observed the Jubilee ever since that time, except when political conditions made it impossible, as in 1800, 1850, and 1875.

Pope Pius XII has given added significance to next year's traditional observance by requesting that it be an instrument of Christian regeneration. The current unrest in the world is reflected in his list of the objects of the Holy Year 1950, given in a letter in his own handwriting to the members of the first meeting of the Central Committee for the Holy Year, held at the Vatican July 23, 1948. The objects, he wrote, are: "Sanctification of souls through prayer and penance and through unshakable loyalty to Christ and the Church. Action for peace and for the protection of the Holy Places (in Palestine). Defense of the Church against the repeated attacks of its enemies. Prayer that those who are in error, the pagans, and the Godless may obtain the true faith. Work for the realization of social justice and organization of aid to the humble ones and those in need."

Traditionally, the Holy Year begins at the Christmas Eve before the Holy Year, when the Pope himself opens the Holy Door, an entrance to St. Peter's basilica which is sealed at all other times. The brick and mortar which form the seal are loosened before the ceremony. The Pope knocks upon the door three times with a silver hammer, singing the versicle, "Open unto me the gates of justice." The masonry crumbles on the third blow of the hammer. Each of the Holy Doors contained in three other basilicas (St. John of the Lateran, St. Paul, and

Santa Maria Maggiore) is similarly opened by a Cardinal designated by the Pope. The end of the Holy Year is observed when the Holy Doors are resealed the following Christmas Eve. The symbolism of the ceremonies is closely connected with the exclusion of Adam and Eve from the Garden, and the expulsion and reconciliation of sinners.

★

IN PAST YEARS, pilgrims gathered the bricks and mortar of the Holy Wall as relics of the Jubilee. An account of the Holy Year in 1450 states that "the fragments are immediately carried off by the crowd. . . . Out of devotion every one who gains the indulgence passes through that door, which is walled up again as soon as the Jubilee is ended." It was during the Holy Year in 1450 that the number of pilgrims in Rome was so great that the bridge of Sant' Angelo gave way, resulting in 200 deaths. This disaster led city authorities to widen Rome's thoroughfares for the throngs which flocked to Rome, and was instrumental in the foundation of many pilgrims' hostels, which provide accommodations for Holy Year visitors.

Approximately 2 million persons visited Rome during the first Holy Year in 1300, most of whom made their way on foot, and saw a city the size of Rome for the first time. Three centuries later, the pilgrims numbered 3 million. It was because of the popularity of the Holy Year celebrations that it was decided to hold them often enough that everyone could attend at least once in a normal lifetime. Originally intended by Pope Boniface VIII to be celebrated once in a hundred years, the interval was reduced to fifty, then to thirty-three (representing the span of Christ's life on earth), and finally to twenty-five. (New York, 5/12—CIP.)

Report from Communist China

TWO DUTCH Franciscan Fathers who had been subjected to torture during ten months of imprisonment by Communist Army officials in China, from September, 1947, until the middle of 1948, continued their missionary work after their release by caring for wounded Communist soldiers.

The story of how one of them, Father Bruns, died from injuries received in prison shortly after his release was told by his Superior, Monsignor Quintinus Pessers, O.F.M., Prefect Apostolic of Kiangchow, Shansi Province, in the first letter received from him since December 3, 1946. The letter arrived at the Franciscan Provincial House at Weert April 14, 1949.

The Prefect Apostolic reported that he, four Dutch Sisters, and a Chinese Franciscan, Father Liu, "have saved nothing but our lives."

According to Monsignor Pessers' letter, the Communist authorities have begun to supply them with wheat, and ordered them to open a hospital. "Every day I celebrate Holy Mass," his report states, "according to the dispensation given. All things considered we are doing fairly well. God takes good care of everything." (The Hague, 5/2—CIP.)

The Stage & Screen

Bruno and Sidney

THERE is nothing seriously wrong with Edward Caulfield's comedy except that it isn't a stage comedy at all. It's a possible short story, or better, a short-short. Mr. Caulfield is exposing a couple of mice who inhabit a third avenue tenement. One of these mice—the one called Bruno—wears a collar and the play revolves around the circumstance that he may or may not be seven years old and worth, therefore, a good many scientific dollars. (Mice, it seems, do not ordinarily exceed the age of two.) Needless to say, there is some rumpus involved in cornering this creature, and all of it grows cumulatively tedious as the evening wears away.

I think Mr. Caulfield's second mistake will be that he seems to have considered he was writing a fantasy. Now, with fantasy of course, once you have established your ground, it is perfectly possible to fly in any direction and to deal with the incubi of your choice. However, it must be remembered that Mr. Caulfield's ground is a factual one, and I believe there is neither truth nor fiction in his scheme of allowing only idiots to people his tenement. As I myself happen to live in a tenement, I am in a position to know how mistaken he is and I can see no reason for Mr. Caulfield to malign it. I had better add that I can see equally little reason for the intrepid New Stages to have produced the business in the first place. (*at New Stages Theatre*)

Mrs. Gibbons' Boys

IT IS WORRYING to have to repeat, but here alas, we have another short story by Will Glickman and Joseph Stein all done up into stage stuff by George Abbott. The fable has to do with an all-over Mother who refuses to believe her rowdy convict sons are other than angels. It might be barely possible for ten minutes reading-time. I think, but not for two hours on the stage of the Music Box. Certainly no one could wish to see any more unemployed on the big street, but it is discouraging to have to watch good actors being woefully wasted. Glenda Farrell, Royal Dano and the intelligent Ray Walston deserve much more than sympathy, although I'm afraid that's all they can garner from this one. (*at the Music Box*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

Blueberry Pie

MOVIEGOERS who saw a lot of war movies during the war had every right to come to the conclusion that our boys were fighting for ice cream and blueberry pie. I now urge those audiences as well as all others to go to a new picture called "*Home of the Brave*" which shows that some of our fighters had other objectives in mind. What's more, besides presenting a few worthy ideals that our fighters may have had and suggesting that the path to peace is paved with love and

understanding, "Home of the Brave" is done in first-rate cinema and manages, as a true work of art should, to be entertaining and at the same time put over its message without sounding like a sermon on tolerance.

Its plot is simple enough: a Negro, stationed on a South Pacific island, returns from a reconnaissance mission paralyzed from the waist down; the doctor, certain that this illness is psychosomatic, gets the patient to talk about his past, which is crowded with resentment against the prejudices he has suffered, and about what happened on the mission that immediately led to the paralysis. Mark Robson has directed the scenes in the present and the flashbacks so well that the whole movie has all the tense excitement of a well manipulated mystery; but it also has the advantage of realism in its battle episodes, in its presentation of pre-battle fear, and in events that bring out our deep-seated prejudices.

Director Robson has done an outstanding job, but as with all good movies, success depends on the cooperation of all parts. Credit must be given to Stanley Kramer for his fine production throughout, to Carl Foreman for his screenplay (based on Arthur Laurents' play) which made several changes from the original but retained its sound motivation, characterization and use of psychology, and to the excellent cast none of whom is known for a starry name but all of whom give performances that effectively contribute to a superb whole. I can't list all this cast, but I should like to draw attention to James Edwards for his portrayal of the Negro who must learn that he is not basically different from other men and that he did not "wish" the death of his friend; Lloyd Bridges as this friend whose friendship is sincere; Steve Brodie as the former "blue-plate special," now a corporal who uses the Negro to relieve his resentment against the war. It was particularly smart of Producer Kramer not to use stars in this picture who would have upset the balance of the rôles; it is the film's themes that are important, and it is because these themes are so well stated (visually and in the dialogue) that you will long remember "Home of the Brave."

Audiences wanting more obvious Americana in their movies might well turn to "*The Stratton Story*," which is the success story supreme and as American as blueberry pie. I don't mean under any circumstances to depreciate this movie; because actually it is a very good movie, but its theme is so straight out of the Alger tradition that it almost seems more like a concocted fiction than the true story of baseball player Monty Stratton. But the facts are there: Monty rose from a Texas farmer, a backlot ballplayer, to a prominent position as one of the most promising pitchers of his day. Then came the dreadful accident in which he lost a leg. Then after a disheartening period of depression, he learned to use an artificial limb—and finally returned to pitch a winning game. The remarkable thing about this picture, which uses these ingredients plus other American dreams of mother-love, the happy home and fair-sportsmanship, is that it isn't a long string of clichés.

Credit for the success of "*The Stratton Story*" should go to Director Sam Wood, Producer Jack Cummings,

scriptwriters Douglas Morrow and Guy Trosper and to a lot of technicians and real baseball players who gave the film its many good shots of games and typical American home life. But special applause should go to the good cast who look and act the rôles so correctly: James Stewart, without any of his cute mannerisms, portraying the man who rose the hard way and then rose again after a defeat that would have polished off most contenders; June Allyson, portraying a grown-up woman for a change, as Monty's wife and inspiration; Agnes Moorehead as Monty's mother and inspiration; Frank Morgan as the good friend and teacher. Whether you like baseball or not, you will like "*The Stratton Story*" because it is a well-made movie and is as honest as its theme of courage. Even if we didn't fight the war for ice cream and blueberry pie, these movies are the tops in their field: ice cream on blueberry pie.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Of Note

Trade Unions in Quebec

THE ASBESTOS industry in Canada has long been tied up by a serious strike. One of the principal employers, the Canadian Johns-Manville Co., Ltd., has been publishing an advertisement in the papers to the effect that since trade unions in the Province of Quebec have dropped the prefix, "Catholic," they have fallen into radical hands and "preach a doctrine opposing capitalism and upholding a philosophy that is more closely akin to Communism or Socialism. . . ." The new Canadian weekly, *The Ensign* (464 St. Francis Xavier St., Montreal, P. Q.), replies to these contentions, which were signed by Lewis H. Brown, Johns-Manville chairman:

As evidence of this last familiar gibe [about Communism and Socialism], Mr. Brown affirmed that the union leaders had sought to "secure for themselves certain controls over managerial policy."

Mr. Brown then added: "It is surprising and a source of disappointment that some spokesmen in the Church appear to be supporting (the) strike leaders. . . ."

It is evident from his remarks that Mr. Brown believes Catholicism to be a socially conservative force, anxious to support the existing capitalistic order, and willing to have the workers remain mere "hands" so long as they are paid a tolerable wage. It is also clear that he believes the present leaders of the Catholic unions to be straying from the doctrinal path.

In reply, it is necessary to state that the dropping of the prefix "Catholic" in no way implies that the unions have ceased to heed the Church in faith and morals. The syndicates still have chaplains, and the chaplains are satisfied.

Nor is it true that the Church's social teachings are conservative. Catholicism is radical in the true sense of the word, and by no means upholds capital-

ism as it has developed. The property defended by the Church is distributed and responsible property, not large and often irresponsible concentrations of power such as the managerial revolution fosters.

Moreover, the present leaders of the Catholic unions would only be following papal directives if they sought to elevate what had heretofore been mere wage contracts into some form of partnership.

The leaders of the Catholic unions may or may not have been right in the conduct of their negotiations with the companies, but it is entirely unwarranted and unhelpful for any employer to cast doubts on the orthodoxy of their basic convictions.

Christians and the Interior Life

IN THE FIRST ISSUE of the Dominican quarterly, *Cross and Crown*, a "Thomistic Review of Spiritual Theology" (published by B. Herder Book Co., 15-17 So. Broadway, St. Louis 2, Mo.), R. Garrigou-Lagrange, author of "Three Ages of the Interior Life," says in part:

In the present period of uncertainty, threatened, as we are, with a third world war, so close upon the two preceding ones, the Lord asks believers to make an earnest effort to live more profoundly by their faith, that it may become firm, living, penetrating, and communicative. He asks this in order that we may help the many souls seeking the way of truth and salvation and quite frequently coming to us for light and comfort.

We Christians must live more and more by our faith, by our trust in God, and by sincere and generous love of God and of our neighbors. We must do this that we may not allow ourselves to be deceived by so many serious errors abroad in the world, that we may not let ourselves be cast down by difficulties, that we may remain firm instead of yielding to our adversaries on what we have no right to yield or surrender: the divine truth and our great duties. We are faced with the task of preserving our treasure of faith and supernatural life and of communicating it in the greatest measure possible to others for their good in the present life and for their eternal salvation, since, after all, souls are either lost through their own fault or saved by the grace of God for eternity.

The Fathers of the Church and spiritual writers have often said that in the spiritual life he who does not advance, falls back. Why? Because it is a law that we must advance. The same thing is true for the child in the natural order: if he does not grow and become a normal adult, he does not remain a child, he becomes an abnormal creature, a deformed dwarf. His body and members grow in disproportion to his stature. It is a natural law that a person must grow until he becomes an adult. Likewise it is a supernatural law of the interior life that the Christian who is advancing toward God should grow in charity and all the virtues until the end of his life on earth, when he will be judged according to his works, be they good or bad.

B. ALTMAN & CO.

FIFTH AVENUE

MU. 9-7000

PALM BEACH SUIT

FOR THE YOUNGER BOY



The impeccably tailored rayon-and-wool Palm Beach suit with cardigan jacket, two pockets, suspender shorts. Cocoa, white or copen, sizes 3 to 5.

12.95

Separate Palm Beach suspender shorts, sizes 3 to 6.

4.00

Altman children's apparel, second floor

... and at East Orange, White Plains and Manhasset

Mail and phone (MU. 9-7000)

orders filled

Books

France Pagan? The Mission of Abbé Godin. Maisie Ward. Sheed. \$3.00.

IN 1943 was published in France, under the title *La France Pays De Mission?*, a report presented to Cardinal Suhard about the de-Christianization of France. The authors, Abbés Godin and Daniel, were not aiming at any skilful literary work, yet the book had all the impact of a masterpiece. It still has, not only in strictly Catholic circles, but among all sorts of people, believers and unbelievers who heave a great sigh of relief at seeing portrayed truthfully what they themselves view with pity, disgust, grief, revolt or cynicism according to their own temperament. But what makes the report the most hopeful cry in Christendom for a long time is that the uncompromising lucidity of the report goes hand in hand with a burning love expressed in deeds.

Abbé Godin was the first "mission priest" in France, the first of the now ever-swelling line of priest-workers; he died accidentally in 1944. Through a sympathetic biographical foreword, Mrs. Sheed has contributed an excellent introduction about Godin's work and his book.

His observations, his suggestions, noted down at random, but ever so vividly and with a wealth of anecdotes, constitute his book proper—translated ably by Mrs. Sheed.

Abbé Godin divides France in three sections:

1. Active Christian communities, not apostolic, yet Christian as a whole. Plenty of sinners, but Christian sinners.
2. Communities mostly gone pagan, but in which there still remains a small Christian nucleus.
3. Communities all gone pagan, inwardly and outwardly.

The people who belong to the last category are those of whom Abbé Godin became the beloved apostle. The result of his daily living among them, of his experiences, of his thoughts and his prayers can be summed up as follows:

To expect people to come back to a place which has become totally foreign to them, no matter how good and legitimate the place, is sheer blindness and self-righteous arrogance. The working class will not come back to a Church with which it has no longer anything in common. The bourgeois Church did lose the working class, the workers cannot return to it. It is up to the Church to meet the workers, not only by being in the midst of them, but by living with them, by being one of them.

Such is the first requisite. The other is, that it is useless to convert individuals. We must build up bold, dynamic new Christian communities. The new Christians are most unhappy among the goody-goody and well-mannered members of parish societies. The right kind of missionary in China does not try to make a European out of a Chinese, but a Chinese Christian. The same applies to the French Pagans.

The plan outlined and experimented with by Abbé Godin is now vigorously under way in France. Following the translation of the book itself, Mrs. Sheed gives a brief and helpful summary of the different aspects of the work: priest-workers, parish missions, residents, Christian communities, etc., all already familiar to the reader of *France Alive*.

At this point this reviewer recalls the frequent question raised during her lecture tour: "What has this got to do with us here in America?" Many times, alas, the question was anticipated by the chairman who called for the audience to rejoice over the regeneration of France and to thank God that we, American Catholics, did not have to face such a problem. Whenever I had a chance I pointed out that it was not a matter of imitating French Catholics, but that the movement for re-Christianization of France was a challenge to us to face our own particular problems.

To my mind one of the most pertinent parts of Abbé Godin's book, is, for us, the evidence it gives that atheist-communism is not to be counter-attacked by anti-communist pickets, rallies, sheer pious invocations and mud-throwing, but by a clear, humble and dynamic consciousness that if the world has gone haywire the responsibility lies at our Christian door first. To tackle the problem of re-Christianization in any form implies first of all not to turn our back on the problems communism has had the merit to raise. Abbé Godin did not turn his back. Neither do his followers in France. May Abbé Godin's book teach us here in America not to do it either.

CLAIRE HUCHET BISHOP.

Four Favorites. D. B. Wyndham Lewis. Longmans. \$3.50.

DR. LEWIS has written four short pieces about persons who became famous by reason of their relationships with rulers of nations—Pompadour, Godoy, Melbourne and Potemkin. The expressed aim is to "survey the entertaining trajectory of this international quartet, to contemplate the influence they exercised, and, if they fell, to discern the reason." But the aim is more successfully stated than achieved. One feels that the book was done with the intention of annihilating some ideas which Lewis considers to be gross misconceptions.

In his foreword the author explains that he will use only those items which are necessary to explain the influence of his subjects, and he prefers "to discard . . . details interesting to the specialist." So the book presents many facts like these: Pompadour once gave a pension to a woman who had predicted to her when she was nine years old that she would become the mistress of Louis XV; Melbourne was once involved in a court scandal which began when he caused an unmarried lady of the palace to be examined for pregnancy—the lady had a tumor; Potemkin once gave a party for Catherine during which the belly of an artificial elephant served as a stage for a full-scale ballet. As a result of this tendency the descriptions become as trivial and as boring as the revelations of newspaper columnists about movie, sports and café celebrities. Lewis gives the feeling that he is in over his head.

There is here really no explanation of mental affinities, no interpretation of circumstances, although the amorous liaisons are acknowledged. The rise of the favorite is usually inexplicable because the reasons reside not so much in the favored one as in the one who favors. At any rate, these four never reveal concrete qualities of magnetism. And the writing does not help in overcoming the book's other deficiencies.

GEORGE MILES.

Rumania Under the Soviet Yoke. Reuben H. Markham. Meador. \$4.00.

FIVE YEARS ago Rumania, a Balkan country about the size of Oregon and with about sixteen million inhabitants, had barely one thousand Communists—the majority of them non-Rumanians. How was it possible to Bolshevize the country? That is the problem with which Mr. Markham is dealing in the 600 pages of this unwieldy volume, which does not even have an index.

Mr. Markham, who labored in the Balkans as a missionary, educator and journalist, was Deputy Director of the Office of War Information and returned after VE Day to the Balkans to follow the workings of the "new democracies," hastily built up with the help of the Red Army. While he was traveling in Rumania he was expelled by the Russians.

Condensed to a third of its volume, this would be a valuable account of Rumania's fate under a Soviet-inspired dictatorship. Unfortunately, the author is loquacious and repetitious.

Despite this fault, the book is useful in furnishing insight into the method with which a small minority was able to take over the country. Some episodes give valuable bits of genuine Balkan atmosphere, which mostly get lost in the reports of our newspapers and magazines. Of special interest are the descriptions of the political tensions on the frontiers of Hungary and Rumania. The Bolshevization did not succeed in easing the national rivalries; in many Transylvanian towns the Hungarian upper class sided with the Russophile government against the majority of the Rumanians. This is a tragic fact, since the Rumanian population will remember in the hour of Communist downfall that the Hungarians worked hand in hand with the Soviet oppressors and Rumanian aversion to Hungarians will increase from year to year as long as the present dictators remain.

While the Hungarians in the Transylvanian towns cling to the Russians as saviors, most of the Hungarians some miles distant, in the Magyar motherland, hate the Russian oppressors as vigorously as do the Rumanian peasants. The tactical cooperation of Balkan minorities with the Russophile governments is no solution of their problems but only a prelude to new national conflicts.

In a country like Rumania, with differing churches, the Communists are eager to incite one church against the other in the hope of dominating them all. The Rumanian Orthodox Church became a favorite of the infamous Mme. Pauker, an obedient agent of the Kremlin, and the other churches were completely enslaved, but only some Baptists actively supported the Communists. While the message of Christ is impeded and eliminated from the schools, Stalinism is proclaimed everywhere as the highest creation of the human mind. Communists are heading all student societies and streamlining the spiritual life according to the teachings of the Kremlin.

The Soviet Union, Markham asserts, has been seizing about three-fourths of Rumania's national income and has humiliated Rumanian national pride in a most aggressive way. This may result, of course, in a future leaning toward the West. Markham tells of the spontaneous enthusiasm with which he was greeted as an American journalist, as a representative of a nation where individual freedom prevails.

MAX FISCHER.

BLUEPRINT FOR A CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

by Leo R. Ward

Congregation of Holy Cross

What should be the aim of a university and what may be considered its accidental products? Ought it to cultivate learning and virtue? Must it seek to train the whole man? What is the proper place of research and graduate studies in a university?

Every competent student of higher learning in America concludes that in our universities something is radically amiss. We shall be set on the right road only by satisfactory answers to the questions just propounded. Such answers are offered in the present volume.

Furthermore, what is the difference between a university and a Catholic university? In the latter what must be the integrating principle? What qualifications should be required of the students, the teachers, and the head of the administration? These questions are discussed in *Blueprint for a Catholic University*, written by an experienced Catholic university professor.

410 pages, \$5.00

At your bookstore or from the

B. Herder Book Company

15 & 17 So. Broadway

St. Louis 2, Mo.

**HOLY
YEAR**
of Jubilee — 1950
FREE Complete Illustrated
Information Booklet
Send for Your Copy NOW
**AMERICAN EXPRESS —
CATHOLIC TRAVEL LEAGUE**
National Headquarters:
1841 BROADWAY
(Dept. M-15)
NEW YORK 23, N. Y.

The University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, Indiana
Announces

THE WRITERS' CONFERENCE

June 27-July 2, 1949

THREE WORKSHOPS—Poetry, Short Fiction, Novel

The staff will include John T. Frederick, John Frederick Nims, Richard Sullivan, Miss Jessamyn West and Henry T. Volkening.

Residence and board facilities on the campus for men and women. For full information address:

Professor Thomas E. Cassidy, Director
The Writers' Conference, Box 34, Notre Dame, Ind.

Enjoy a
holiday of
music-making

with the famous
Catholic liturgical
music featured Au-
gust 1 to 11 with
High Mass, Benedic-
tion Daily. Special
accommodations for
clergy and religious.

Write for details.

Miss M. M. Trapp, Stowe, Vermont

Four 10-day "Sing
Weeks"—July 4 to Au-
gust 25. Participate in
choral singing. Learn an
instrument. Folk danc-
ing. Viennese Food.

with the famous TRAPP FAMILY SINGERS

**Trapp
Family
Music
Camp**

The Academy Award Winner as "The Best Foreign Film of 1948"

6th
mo.

PIERRE FRESNAY as
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL in
MONSIEUR VINCENT

55th ST. PLAYHOUSE

154 West 55th St.
East of 7th Ave.
Columbus 5-9438

Oedipus Myth and Complex. Patrick Mullahy. *Herm-
itage Press.* \$5.00.

THE SUBTITLE, "A Review of Psychoanalytic Theory," indicates the major portion of this work. To this are added the complete text of the Oedipus trilogy of Sophocles and an introduction by Erich Fromm.

Psychoanalysts have made illuminating use of the Oedipus and other classic myths for understanding human nature. Antedating the organized disciplines of philosophy and theology, and passing through the minds and hearts of many more men, the myth captures more concretely the existential richness of human experience. While assuming a quasi-historical form, it transcends the singularity of the episodes related and typifies happenings crucial in the life of every man.

The Oedipus myth is primordial in many ways. One basic characteristic of man is that he is born in a state of extreme dependence yet endowed with potencies and cravings for an independence that can challenge the very persons responsible for his being and development. The tragic Oedipus, who killed his father and married his own mother, represents an extreme to which impulses, present in all humans in analogous form, can go. As Freud stated: "His fate moves us only because it might have been our own because the oracle laid upon us before our birth the very curse which rested upon him." The particular issue about which the Oedipal complex turns, be it affection, or power, or wealth, or prestige (Freud stressed sexual attachment, somewhat crassly at times) may differ from one person to another, but every little tyke, born helpless, must eventually determine, in achieving the full stature of personality, how much of the parental influence is to be adhered to or rejected.

It can be shown that Sophocles in his genius was not unmindful of the part played by unconscious motivation in the inexorable events of the Oedipus drama. It was however Sigmund Freud in our own times who emphasized the importance of the unconscious for understanding human behavior and conduct. In this connection the human mind has often been compared to an iceberg. Seven times more lies beneath than appears on the surface. The analogy is good except that more probably seven times seventy greater bulk lies hidden in the unconscious.

★

The everlasting contribution of Freud was the discovery and development of techniques for making us aware of unconscious processes—psychoanalysis, dream analysis, and interpretation of various processes of symbolization. Realizing the provisional and temporary character of much of the explanatory superstructure of his thinking, Freud wrote that he expected his theories to be radically revised with time. Mr. Mullahy here presents in addition to a profound analysis of the Viennese master's thought, an outline of the thinking of the principal revisionists of Freud with their ideas grouped around the capital concept of the Oedipus complex. Thus we find a study of Alfred Adler, C. G. Jung, Otto Rank, Karen Horney, Erich Fromm, and Harry Stack Sullivan. He has succeeded in an exceedingly difficult task because many of these authors have frequently changed their views, employ figurative and obscure language, and are generally unsystematic in their thinking. He expounds their definitive doctrines with remarkable

objectivity and clarity leaving criticism and evaluation to a brief final chapter. This is penetrating and sober though admittedly not exhaustive.

Mr. Mullahy has done a very great service to all students of human nature in providing this exposition of contemporary psychoanalytic thinking. His philosophical background contributes mightily to the discernment and order which he brings to this tangled field. In the pressing task of synthesis between ancient wisdom and modern technique, further contributions from the pen of Mr. Mullahy should be eagerly welcomed.

HARRY MCNEILL.

China Changed My Mind. David Morris. Houghton. \$2.50.

IT IS a rare treat at any time to meet such a book as this. The reader who knows the Orient will find much here to stir old nostalgic echoes. The reader who does not will find a picture that is altogether true, in both its pleasant and unpleasant aspects.

But *China Changed My Mind* goes far beyond merely presenting a picture. For David Morris seems one of the best qualified of the present group of young writers to take the place of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. He has the same clearness of vision, gentleness of humor, and depth of philosophy.

One is inclined to doubt a little the thesis implied by Mr. Morris's title—that China changed his mind. The dust-jacket would have one understand that two years in the country changed Mr. Morris from a conscientious objector to a man willing to fight. And although Mr. Morris himself pays lip service to this idea, the general impression his story creates is somewhat different. When the war broke out he was granted exemption from military service as a conscientious objector, on the condition that he did ambulance work. In 1941 he was accepted as a member of the Friend's Ambulance Unit, and in 1942 arrived in China. The greater part of the book is the recounting of the reactions of a sensitive and thoughtful young man to the many lessons China could teach. From what he writes it seems fair to assume that China did not actually change his mind about being a pacifist. Rather, what he learned from the country and its people seems more nearly to have been that he never was a pacifist. Instead of changing his mind, China awakened him to the realities of himself.

The important thing about this book is not, however, the question of why Mr. Morris changed his mind. The important thing is the really fine writing it contains. The simplicity and understanding, the quiet humor and clear description—these are the most impressive and finest things about the book.

JAMES O. FREDERICK.

His Human Majesty. Kay Boyle. Whittlesey. \$3.00.

THIS tour-de-force might have fared better if Kay Boyle had more of an eye for the masculine side of male character. In a novel concerning soldiers in an Army camp, this deficiency is calamitous. The soldiers are US ski-troopers training in Colorado, a strange salad of native Europeans and returned American expatriates, and they become involved in bizarre situations against an attractive background of mountains, snow, unusual

Master works by



HARRY AUSTRYN WOLFSON

Two books by a great scholar which are
receiving the unqualified praise
they deserve

PHILO

FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY IN JUDAISM,
CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM

Theological Studies: "To historians of dogma or philosophy, and perhaps more urgently still to the increasing number of those interested in the problems of the relation of faith and reason, Professor Wolfson's *Philo* will address itself."

—Thurston Davis, S. J.

Saturday Review: "An event in the history of ideas. . . . The educated layman will find his *Philo* as intriguing as the specialist must find it challenging."—Horace W. Kallen.

Second printing, Two volumes, \$12.50

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SPINOZA

Unfolding the Latent Processes of His Reasoning

N. Y. Times Book Review: "The unique and powerful vision of Baruch Spinoza—Professor Wolfson's book is a work of illuminating scholarship. . . . It is of moment that it be called to the attention of all laymen with the least pretensions to philosophy."—Irwin Edman New one-volume edition, \$9.00

At your bookstore, or order from



HARVARD
UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge 38, Massachusetts

military duty, and quaint local miner folk. Many passages of superfine writing and bull's-eye observation hang wasting on an ambitious plot structure which resolutely refuses to come alive and engage the attention.

Soldiers in training camp, not performing their *raison d'être* of fighting the enemy, are in fact disenfranchised creatures of the military, and spend their best efforts as private individuals escaping from the monumental boredom in which they live by day-dreaming, reminiscing, wenching, retiring into the anodyne comfort of their passive selves, or by parading the sophistication or habit of mind that gave them standing in civil life. This is what Kay Boyle has her soldiers doing most of the time. Doubtless unbearably romantic to ingrown adolescents, this side of man bores me, and prospective readers are accordingly and hereby warned.

Fatigue, violence, desire, gluttony, envy, anger, and some of the Army's sloth move the story along and bring out the wide varieties of nature and background in this fortuitous group of rather shadowy men. The cultivation and decency of the half-English ex-school-teacher Fennington and his friends who engage in admirable gestures of rescue and friendship, might have carried out the author's intent of characterizing attractive types if their dialogue did not so constantly clash with the way soldiers really talk. By this time Kay Boyle should know that embarrassing references to bodily functions are not indispensable, and certainly not enough. I doubt if any good publisher would have accepted this as the first novel of an unknown author. One superlative scene of near-murder makes a good short story, though. It is in Chapter Nine, if you should happen on a copy.

PETER WHITE.

Glee-Wood. Margaret Williams. Sheed. \$6.00.

MMARGARET WILLIAMS, who a few years ago through her *Word-Hoard* made the treasures of Anglo-Saxon letters available in graceful modern dress, has done a similarly praiseworthy job on Middle English literature in this second volume which she calls "glee-wood," the Anglo-Saxon kenning for a harp—a title particularly apt for a medieval treasury: "Speech is God's gleeman and a game of heaven." The selections are from the types of writing carried on in Medieval England—chronicles, bestiaries, Arthurian romance, debates, religious lyrics, alliterative "Pearl" poems, mystical writings of Rolle and Hilton, miracle plays, etc. Langland and Chaucer are given reasonably generous space, but, of

course, it is not possible to do justice to these masters in any kind of anthology.

Glee-Wood is not a mere collection of "significant" pieces of Middle English: it is to the anthology what a tour under the direction of a charming and intelligent cicerone is to a casual and lonely round of sight-seeing; for Mother Williams links these pieces together with a chain of clear and deeply learned commentary. In her own words:

The method used in both [volumes] is the same; representative passages, in translations as close as possible to the original in form and spirit, are set against the background of religious, political and literary history which alone can truthfully interpret them.

The special value of the book lies not in the selections but in the way these are handled. There are in general three ways of treating your material in a work of this sort. You can present it in the original language; this is the only way for the specialized student. You can modernize the really hard words and leave just enough of the archaic dress and spelling to puzzle and impede the general reader. Or you can turn the whole into modern English verse or prose in such a way as to maintain the true feeling and spirit of the original and give pleasurable reading for all. It is quite beyond argument that this last is a difficult task, one to be achieved by no one but an artist and scholar of high rank. Such is the achievement of Margaret Williams in *Glee-Wood*, in which even the subtle rhythms of the old alliterative poetry are maintained. Picking almost at random, take this one on the nature of the lion, from the "Bestiary":

When he is first born
Still lies the lion and stirs not from his sleep
Till the sun has shone three days about him;
Then his father raises him with the roar that he makes.

A third law has the lion. When he lies to sleep
He shall never lock the lids of his eyes.

Or this from the beautiful poem "Cleanness," in which Abraham entertains the three angels:

The man then made haste to bare his head,
Took a clean cloth and cast it on the green,
Threw thriftily thereon three unleavened cakes,
Brought butter withal and by the bread set it.

SPRING LAKE BEACH
ON THE OCEAN • NEW JERSEY

NOW IS THE HOUR—to plan your JULY vacation at this delightful and renowned resort... for years a favorite with Catholics. To be assured choice of accommodations during July we suggest your immediate inquiry for booklet and rates.

A short walk to St. Catharine's & St. Margaret's Churches

Hotel WARREN
F. O. COSGROVE, President



PORTSMOUTH PRIORY

SUMMER SCHOOL

June 22-August 18. Regular and review classes for boys in college preparatory subjects: English, Languages, History, Mathematics, and Sciences. Introductory course in Philosophy June 13-July 9. Sailing, swimming, and other sports. Conducted by Benedictine Monks assisted by Lay Masters.

For brochure address

ENROLLMENT DIRECTOR

Portsmouth, Rhode Island

Meet measures of milk he put between them,
And then the pottage in a fair platter.
As a steward in goodly wise he served them fair,
With serious and sweet manner, of such as he had.

Works of the English contemplatives, unfortunately neglected by scholars even to our own day, are sampled, along with that beautifully wrought piece of good counsel, *The Ancren Riwele*. It would be difficult at any time not to admire such vivid writing as this warning against sloth:

The slothful lies and sleeps in the devil's arms as his dear darling, and the devil lays his beak down to his ear and whispers to him all that he will. For so it surely is with him that is idle in goodness; the fiend talks earnestly and the idle receive his lore. He that is idle and careless sleeps in the devil's arms, but he shall grimly awake at the doomsday at the blowing of the angel's trumpet, and in hell shall awake with fearful amazement.

As already hinted, the superior virtue of *Glee-Wood* lies in the richness of its style, not only in the translations but also in the critical portions of the work, which from beginning to end is a combination of deft, subtle verse and graceful idiomatic prose. There is effortless simplicity combined with vivid imagination, as, for example, in this explanation of the source of the bestiary:

If not by the people, like the Proverbs, it was popular as much at home in the country as in the court, a product of the monasteries that faced upon both worlds. By the highways of translation and the byways of storytelling, not to mention the loose winds of popular tradition, wisdom from the East had long been finding its way into English literature.

The prose of *Glee-Wood* is refreshing at a time when, too frequently, critical prose either has no sense of form at all, straggling along anemically, or bristles with clanging technicalities and mere jargon.

A. P. CAMPBELL.

Goethe. Wisdom and Experience. Selections by Ludwig Curtius. Translated and edited by Herman J. Weigand. Pantheon. \$3.75.

A BOOK of Goethe quotations, unfortunately without an index of names and subjects. These tatters of text—from one line to four pages—are taken from Goethe's prose-writings, both literary and scientific, from his diaries, his letters and recorded conversations. This might be a fine method to represent authors of maxims and apothegms like La Rochefoucauld, Chamford and Lichtenberg, or highly aphoristic philosophers like Montaigne, Pascal, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. But for Goethe such a book has only secondary value. Goethe is first of all a poet; most of his wisdom has been expressed in verse (in *Faust*, in *Tasso*, in his poems and epigrams). A book excluding any verse, therefore, will be valuable only for those who know Goethe as a poet and are looking for supplementary information about his ideas and prejudices. Most of the quotations are self-explanatory, but some may easily be misinterpreted, separated from their context. The editor's introduction abounds in trivialities.

Despite these shortcomings, readers already familiar with Goethe's work may be stimulated to interesting

ORATE FRATRES

Pioneer Liturgical Review in English, founded by Dom Virgil Michel, O.S.B. In the 22nd year of recognized leadership.

Mass, Sacraments, and Sacramentals, including the Divine Office and the Church year—these are first in the life of the Church. Active and intelligent participation in them is therefore likewise primary in the formation of a fully Christian life, whether of the individual or of a parish. Such participation means putting on the mind of the Church—which is the mind of Christ—in regard to God, society, oneself.

Orate Fratres strives to further such participation. It also shows how such a "living with the Church" radically effects all departments of human thought and endeavor. Particular stress is laid on the relation between liturgy and the social questions. Integrates the whole field of "the Catholic revival." Twelve issues a year, 48 pages each issue.

ORATE FRATRES Subscription rates:

1 year \$2.50* (outside U.S.A. \$3.00).
2 years \$4.25* (outside U.S.A. \$5.25).

*American Possessions and Territories take regular U.S.A. rate.

THE LITURGICAL PRESS

ST. JOHN'S ABBEY

Collegeville, Minnesota

THE CATHOLIC WORKER

(Member of Catholic Press Association)

A monthly paper dedicated to the cause of labor, the poor, the oppressed.

Written in the language of the man on the street, **THE CATHOLIC WORKER** is openly and unashamedly the champion of the have-nots.

Articles on strikes, civil liberties, war, national policy, labor unions, the land, the Works of Mercy.

House of Hospitality in New York and 40 affiliated groups and houses in various American cities.

Subscription, 25c per year. Foreign, 80c per year. Bundle orders, 10 or more copies, 1c per copy plus postage.

THE CATHOLIC WORKER

115 Mott St., New York 13, N. Y.

C549

Please send me **THE CATHOLIC WORKER** for....

years. I am enclosing \$..... My subscription starts with the issue

Name

Address

Post Office..... State.....

Next Week

REPORT ON CHILE, by Garrett McGrath, is a striking analysis, directly from the scene, of a complex Latin American political situation. It deals principally with an important split in Chile's long-dominant Conservative Party. One of its most curious elements is an unsuccessful attack on the orthodoxy of Jacques Maritain, for Maritain's political philosophy has supplied the motivation of the new Falangist minority group.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CATHOLIC NOVELIST, by Bruce Marshall, deals with a highly provocative subject. The author of "The World, the Flesh and Father Smith" touches on such facets as the presenting of sin and virtue, portraying sinners and saints and the importance of getting "the meaning of the world right." All this illustrated by apposite references to the author's contemporaries.

Also John C. Cort's *The Labor Movement, Stage and Screen*, Books, and other features.

Use the attached coupon—or a facsimile—to include the May 27 issue in your trial subscription.

-----12 Weeks for \$1-----

FOR NEW SUBSCRIBERS

THE COMMONWEAL,
386 Fourth Ave.,
New York 16, N. Y.

For the enclosed \$1 send me
the next 12 issues of
THE COMMONWEAL
including the May 27 issue

Name
Street
City 5/20/49

observations while reading the quotations, mostly from his mature years. According to the wide range of Goethe's interests, we find manifold thoughts on public affairs and arts, on the social and the moral sphere, on science and philosophy, on nature and religion. Many readers will be dissatisfied with the inconsistency of Goethe's remarks on religion, but spellbound by his psychological understanding of many features of Catholicism.

The quotations are often incomplete and the picture the reader draws from them about Goethe's philosophy may sometimes be fragmentary or even misleading. But on the other hand, it is to be welcomed that many fine sentences, hidden in lesser known works, have now been made accessible to a wider American public. Despite all the recent books on history and religion, it is fascinating, for instance, to listen to Goethe's speculations—taken from the Notes to the "West-Oestlicher Divan"—that the conflict of Faith and Skepticism is the deepest theme of human history. "All epochs that are ruled by faith, in whatever form, are glorious, elevating, fruitful in themselves and for posterity. All epochs, on the other hand, in which skepticism in whatever form maintains a precarious triumph, even should they boast for a moment of a borrowed splendor, lose their meaning for posterity, because no one can take pleasure in wrestling with the study of what is essentially sterile." M. F.

Titans of the Soil: Great Builders of Agriculture. Edward Jerome Dies. Chapel Hill. \$3.50.

THE SEVENTEEN Americans presented in this brief study are in large part inventors rather than agronomists. Outstanding are Eli Whitney with his cotton gin, John Deere with the mold-board plow, Cyrus H. McCormick with reaper and combine. More strictly agricultural are such figures as George H. Shull, the developer of hybrid corn; Theobald Smith, who conquered Texas cattle fever; Mark A. Carleton, who introduced into the US durum and hard winter wheat. Each biography is on the sketchy side, rather like a slightly expanded encyclopedia reference. The most interesting pages deal, if all too briefly, with the considerable agricultural experimentation of George Washington and Thomas Jefferson.

CONTRIBUTORS

Peter THOMPSON is a field worker with the UNRRA CASAS program in Italy.

John R. VOSBURGH, a veteran of the Italian campaign, is presently a journalist on the staff of the *Miami Herald*.

Claire Huchet BISHOP, the author of "France Alive" and other books, is a novelist and critic living in New York City.

George MILES is a critic who lives in Brooklyn, N. Y.

Max FISCHER is a journalist and former foreign correspondent who works principally for the German language press in New York City.

Harry McNEILL is a clinical psychologist who lives in New York.

James O. FREDERICK is a graduate student at Columbia University.

Peter WHITE is an associate of Common Cause in New York City.

A. P. CAMPBELL teaches literature at St. Dunstan's College on Prince Edward Island. He is now on leave of absence taking graduate study at Fordham University.

Educational Directory

COLLEGES—WOMEN—PENNSYLVANIA

ROSEMONT COLLEGE

Rosemont, Pa. A Catholic College for Women conducted by the Religious of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. Accredited by the Association of American Universities. Situated on the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Eleven miles from Philadelphia. Address the Registrar for information. Telephone Bryn Mawr 4514.

MARYLAND

COLLEGE OF NOTRE DAME OF MARYLAND

North Charles St., Baltimore, Maryland. An Accredited Catholic Institution for the Higher Education of Women. Conducted by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Exceptional Advantages. For information address the Registrar.

ILLINOIS

ROSARY COLLEGE

River Forest, Illinois. Conducted by the Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa, Wisconsin. Approved by the Association of American Universities. Liberal Arts, Home Economics, Library Science. Library School accredited by American Library Association. Foreign Study Branch for Junior Year Abroad at Fribourg, Switzerland.

INDIANA

SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE NOTRE DAME

Holy Cross, Indiana. Conducted by Sisters of the Holy Cross. Fully accredited Liberal Arts College for Women. Courses leading to degrees of Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Science. Academic and professional courses in Nursing. Graduate Department of Sacred Theology. Address: Box 71, Saint Mary's College, Holy Cross, Ind. Railroad station, South Bend, Ind.

PREP SCHOOLS—BOYS—OHIO

GILMOUR ACADEMY

Gates Mills (Cleveland), Ohio. A Resident Preparatory School for Boys. Conducted by The Brothers of Holy Cross, Notre Dame, Ind. Situated in the picturesque Chagrin Valley in suburban Cleveland, enjoying the facilities afforded by the city's libraries, galleries and museums. Distinctive rural-home atmosphere. 133 acre campus. Educational, cultural, and physical training programs. Fully accredited four year college preparatory course offered. Classes limited to 15 students. Brother Theophane Schmitt C.S.C., Headmaster.

NEW JERSEY

DELBARTON SCHOOL

Morristown, New Jersey. An hour's drive from the George Washington Bridge or Holland Tunnel. A country day and boarding school for boys conducted by Benedictine Monks. Six forms, comprising the 7th and 8th grades and four years of college preparatory courses. Small classes. Thorough guidance department. Complete athletic program. Write for prospectus to the Headmaster.

SPECIAL SCHOOL

MARYDELL SCHOOL INC.

Langhorne, Pa. Retarded children require medication, training and individual instruction. Learn of our methods and results by visiting the school. T. Frank Devlin, M.D., President.

SCHOOL OF NURSING

COLLEGE OF MT. ST. VINCENT SCHOOL OF NURSING

Conducted in cooperation with St. Vincent's Hospital, New York City. Offers courses leading to Diploma of Nursing and Bachelor of Science Degree with a major in Nursing. Write for Bulletin L to Director of Nursing, College of Mt. St. Vincent, Mt. St. Vincent-on-Hudson, New York 63, N. Y.

COLLEGES—MEN—WISCONSIN

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY

Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin. Conducted by the Jesuit Fathers. Courses offered in Liberal Arts, Business Administration, Journalism, Engineering, Law, Speech, Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Graduate School. Write to Director of Admissions for further information.

RHODE ISLAND

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

A Liberal Arts College
for Men.

Conducted by

The Dominican Fathers.

Providence, R. I.

Classified

★ Rate for your message, 10c a word. 75c a line for displayed copy. Discounts: 5% for 3 times, 10% for 7 times, 15% for 13 times.

BOOKS

★ Books: Used, Old Rare.
For Librarians, Collectors, Readers.
Huge Stock. Reasonably Priced.
Catalogs Free. Browsers Invited.
Want Lists Solicited. Libraries Purchased.
DAUBER & PINE BOOKSHOPS, INC.
66 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, N. Y.

HOTEL

★ COPLEY PLAZA HOTEL
Maurice T. Lawler, General Manager
Boston 16, Mass.
2 minutes from Back Bay R. R. Station

IRISH BOOKS AND GIFTS

★ Books, Linens, Gifts. Catalogs.
IRISH INDUSTRIES DEPOT, Inc.
876 Lexington Ave. (near 65th), New York

SITUATION WANTED

★ TEACHER AVAILABLE. Summer or Fall. Graduate training and teaching experience in Catholic and non-Catholic schools, in Education, Philosophy, Sociology, Political Science, History. Box 520, The Commonwealth.

New Printing!

(Not Revised)

The CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA DICTIONARY

A compendium of the 15 volumes of the Encyclopedia
in one volume. Compiled and edited under the
direction of the editors of The Catholic Encyclopedia.

1. Every subject in Religion, Scripture, Doctrine, Morals, Worship.
2. The Church in every country, dioceses, centers, missions; the hierarchy, clergy, religious orders; Church societies; lay organizations, sects, the various Churches, false religions.
3. Historical events and persons, saints, popes, prelates, priests, celebrated men and women.
4. Popular explanation of subjects in philosophy, psychology, education, ethics, sociology and political science, with which religion is concerned.
5. Arts which have served and derived inspiration from religion: painting, architecture, sculpture, music, literature; artists and authors.
6. The relation of science with religion through notable Catholics and other Christians prominent as scientists.

VALUED BY THOSE OF Every Denomination

From a Public Library:

"Already our public has made very much use of your grand book. It has helped some to understand better the Catholic religion and also the Protestant."

1104 pages

7 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches

1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches thick

\$6.75 postpaid

**Department CE
THE COMMONWEAL
386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y.**

Please send me a copy of The Catholic Encyclopedia Dictionary for which I enclose \$6.75 (postpaid—N. Y. City residents add 14c sales tax) ☐.